

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 PRETOR 04085 110922Z

16

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 EB-11 COME-00 NEA-14 IO-14 SAM-01 DRC-01 /135 W

----- 100453

R 110822Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0566

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4085

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, RH, SF

SUBJECT: COMPLETION OF BEIT BRIDGE RAIL LINK

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

1. LOCAL PRESS REPORTS THAT RUTENGA-BEIT BRIDGE RAIL LINK COMPLETED ON SEPTEMBER 10, THUS GIVING RHODESIA FIRST DIRECT RAIL CONNECTION WITH SOUTH AFRICA. RUTENGA-BEIT BRIDGE LINE HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN 1976, BUT FOLLOWING APRIL COUP IN LISBON AND FEAR THAT MOZAMBIQUE PORTS MIGHT BE CLOSED TO RHODESIAN TRAFFIC, WORK ON LINE HAD BEEN ACCELERATED. IMPORTANCE OF NEW ROUTE LIES IN FACT THAT IT GIVES RHODESIA OUTLET TO THE SEA WHICH NOT CONTROLLED BY WHAT RHODESIANS MUST VIEW AS POTENTIALLY HOSTILE STATES. UNTIL COMPLETION OF THE ROUTE, RHODESIA HAD THREE OUTLETS TO INDIAN OCEAN -- ONE THROUGH UMTALI TO BEIRA, ONE THROUGH RUTENGA TO LOURENCO MARQUES, AND THE OTHER THROUGH BOTSWANA TO SOUTH AFRICA.

2. ALTHOUGH NOW OPEN TO LIMITED TRAFFIC, LINE NOT EXPECTED TO BECOME FULLY OPERATIONAL UNTIL EARLY 1975. MARSELLING YARDS AT BEIT BRIDGE AND RUTENGA HAVE YET TO BE COMPLETED,  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 PRETOR 04085 110922Z

SIGNAL BOXES AND SIGNS HAVE TO BE ERECTED, AND SOME WORK

REMAINS TO BE DONE ON RUTENGA JUNCTION. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNT, SINGLE TRAIN DAILY EXPECTED TO BEGIN RUNNING IN OCTOBER WITH FULL UTILIZATION OF LINE STARTING AFTER FIRST OF YEAR.

3. COMMENT. WHILE RUTENGA-BEIT BRIDGE LINK WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SERVE AS INVALUABLE LIFE LINE TO RHODESIA SHOULD MOZAMBIQUE PORTS BE CLOSED TO SALISBURY, THERE SOME QUESTION WHETHER SINGLE LINE WILL HAVE SUFFICEINT CAPACITY HANDLE VOLUME TRAFFIC NECESSARY MAINTAIN PRESENT LEVELS EXPORTS AND IMPORTS. SOUTH AFRICAN PORTS, WHICH ALREADY CONGESTED, LIKELY ALSO TO BE FURTHERCLOGGED BY NECESSITY OF HANDLING RHODESIAN CARGOS. UNLESS SOUTH AFRICANS INCLINED TO GIVE PRIORITY TO RHODESIAN TRAFFIC, THIS WILL TEND FURTHER LIMIT VOLUME OF TRAFFIC ON NEW LINE.  
HURD

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** LANDLOCKED COUNTRIES, RAIL TRANSPORTATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 11 SEP 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974PRETOR04085  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740252-1156  
**From:** PRETORIA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740956/aaaabuxn.tel  
**Line Count:** 76  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** martinjw  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 16 JUL 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <16 JUL 2002 by maustmc>; APPROVED <29 JAN 2003 by martinjw>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** COMPLETION OF BEIT BRIDGE RAIL LINK CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY  
**TAGS:** ETRN, RH, SF  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005